

IT IS NOT ANNOYING TO LEARN! CONTRIBUTIONS OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: CASE STUDY**NÃO É CHATO APRENDER! CONTRIBUIÇÕES DA TERAPIA OCUPACIONAL NO AMBIENTE ESCOLAR: RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA****NO ES MOLESTO APRENDER! LAS CONTRIBUCIONES DE LA TERAPIA OCUPACIONAL EN EL AMBIENTE ESCOLAR: ESTUDIO DE CASO**

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The difficulty of learning directly influence interest, motivation and attention spent by children in the classroom and the act of playing is an important tool to connect children to learning. This study aims to present an experience lived during the Supervised Internship I of Occupational Therapy Course of a public University, conducted in the second half of 2013, in order to expose the results of the intervention. This work is characterized as a case study of qualitative type. There was significant involvement and interest of children with the activities developed through games as well as better performance in solving them. Playing provides the means by which the link between children and significant learning is established.

Descriptors: Child; Occupational therapy; Play and playthings.

A dificuldade de aprendizagem influencia diretamente na motivação interesse e atenção dispendidos pela criança em sala de aula e o brincar é uma ferramenta importante para conectar a criança à aprendizagem. Este estudo tem como objetivo apresentar uma experiência vivenciada durante o Estágio Supervisionado I do Curso de Terapia Ocupacional de uma universidade pública, realizado no 2º semestre de 2013, com a finalidade de expor os resultados obtidos com a intervenção. O trabalho se caracteriza como estudo de caso de natureza qualitativa. Houve significativo envolvimento e interesse das crianças com as atividades desenvolvidas através de brincadeiras, bem como melhor desempenho na resolução das mesmas. O brincar possibilita o meio pelo qual se estabelece o elo da criança com a aprendizagem significativa.

Descritores: Criança; Terapia ocupacional; Jogos e brinquedos.

La dificultad de aprender directamente influye en el interés por la motivación y la atención pasó por el niño en la clase y el juego es una herramienta importante para conectar al niño a aprender. Este estudio tiene como objetivo presentar una experiencia vivida durante las prácticas supervisadas I del Curso de Terapia Ocupacional de una universidad pública, realizada en la segunda mitad de 2013, con el fin de exponer los resultados de la intervención. Este es un estudio de caso cualitativo. Hubo una participación e interés de los niños con las actividades desarrolladas a través del juego, así como un mejor rendimiento en la solución de ellos significativo. El juego ofrece el medio por el cual establecer el vínculo entre los niños y el aprendizaje significativo.

Descriptor: Niño; Terapia ocupacional; Juego e implementos de juego.

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INTRODUCTION

The Statute of Child and Adolescent (ECA in Portuguese), established by Law No. 8,069/90 states the social value of children and adolescents as holders of rights and values respect as they are people in development¹.

The third infancy period corresponds to children aged from six to eleven years old. At this stage the child has physical growth reduction when compared to earlier stages, however, with a consequent increase in strength and athletic abilities. As for the cognitive development, it stands out for decrease in egocentrism, valorization of logical thinking and increased memory and language skills. Psychosocial development becomes more complex, which influences self-esteem².

Child development addresses the whole child, who is constituted from the interaction of their genetic potential with a wide range of factors existing in their environment³.

A very important area of occupation in which the child is inserted at this stage of life is the school, and it is common, over the years, that educators and other professionals realize the need to provide appropriate support for students with difficulties and/or learning disabilities. It is noteworthy that, if necessary, intervention should be offered as soon as possible to enhance educational capabilities⁴.

One of the professionals working in education field is the occupational therapist who advocates in their activities to promote occupational performance of the child, seeking to develop necessary skills regarding the development period in which the child is⁵.

Thus, in school environment the professional can intervene in students' performance in the following occupational areas: education, playing, leisure, and social participation. Among the possibilities of intervention we can be mention the child's participation in the disciplines studied, extracurricular activities and access to different environments of school in order to equate rights⁴.

The occupational therapist promotes several games as a strategy to achieve the objectives outlined in the intervention in order to integrate in their actions the most important and significant occupation in child development, the act of playing⁵. Playing is a critical factor for the development of children at any age and can stimulate learning⁶.

Thus, the objective of this article is to present a lived experience during the Supervised Internship I of Occupational Therapy course at a public university, in order to expose the results of the intervention.

METHOD

This proposal is characterized as experience report of qualitative type, based on content analysis. It should be noted that the main verb of qualitative research is to understand, that is, to consider during analysis the actions and/or subjects reflecting about their uniqueness and subjectivity⁷.

This study was conducted during the Supervised Internship I of Occupational Therapy course of Federal University of Triangulo Mineiro in a private school in the city of Uberaba, Minas Gerais, Brazil, which receives children from nursery to elementary school.

Occupational therapeutic interventions were performed during five meetings of 50 minutes from September to October 2013. The sample consisted of 17 children from 8 to 9 years of chronological age, attending the 4th year grade of elementary school. Interventions proposed during the internship were developed from the reading comprehension difficulties, which was the primary need mentioned by teacher.

The actions were developed in the Portuguese class time, with the presence of the teacher in charge. The inclusion criterion was to be enrolled at the school where the study was conducted, attending the 4th year of elementary school and taking part in the actions developed by the Occupational Therapy.

Interventions were guided by games such as treasure hunt involving a

psychomotor route with interpretation of the "Purple-Beard Pirate" story through tips for the route; cordless telephone with pictures, sequencing game in which the last child represented with drawings the information received; the mysterious text, which consists of reading a text in numeric codes format as well as making questions regarding the disclosed text; music activity associating music to reading with clapping of a music staff represented by symbols (large ball - strong sound, small ball - weak sound, dash - silence) and the game house, guest, construction, earthquake, which generated significant discussion with children about the value of friendship and the difficulties faced by those who are excluded from activities and games.

During the analysis of the data we used a methodology based in the classification of elements by categorizing the strategies used over the course of the interventions. For the analysis, we used the records (developments) and reports made during the internship, the critical analysis of interventions and an interview with the Portuguese teacher to assess her perception about the contribution of occupational therapy in the school performance of the class.

RESULTS

Reflecting on the interventions enabled establishing the existence of four important strategies for achievement and success of interventions, namely: the use of playfulness, activities guided in the assumptions of psychomotor education (involving psychomotor challenge), enhancement of self-esteem (by reducing difficulties and valuing cognitive and perceptual functions).

After analyzing the data we observed that in addressing the Portuguese discipline using different strategies to overcome the difficulties of interpretation of text, children felt more motivated and interested in the content of the discipline and in carrying out the activities developed during Occupational Therapy interventions.

During the interventions it was observed that some children showed more

difficulty in activities requiring attention and concentration such as: reading the numeric codes and sequencing activity with drawing reproduction.

Despite the observed difficulty, children were able to meet the goal of both activities, despite taking longer to implement them. It is noteworthy that children who had no difficulties were challenged to use their knowledge and skills to participate in interventions and collaborate with the group.

The teacher in charge for the discipline reported that during her classes children improved their school performance in the discipline of Portuguese and developed greater interest in the content thereof.

DISCUSSION

According to the (Brazilian) Federal Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy (COFFITO in Portuguese) the occupational therapist must understand the Human Activity as a creative, creator, playful, expressive, evolutionary, productive and self-maintenance process; they should also understand the man as praxic being. This professional is prepared to act in the daily life of clients committed to their praxic functions, aiming to achieve a better quality of life⁷.

With respect to intervention with children the play is used, which is considered an important strategy to stimulate the biopsychosocial development, especially at school environment⁷.

The school should promote significant learning situations, proposing challenging activities that enable the construction of knowledge, providing opportunities for the student to be more creative, participatory and active, becoming a being with personal initiative and autonomy, leading them to acquire attitudes of mutual respect, dignity and solidarity⁸.

Playing is a basic need as it is nutrition, health, housing and education. Playing helps children in their physical, emotional, intellectual and social development, because, through playful activities, the child can incorporate concepts, relate ideas, establish logical relations,

develop oral and body expression, strengthen social skills, reduce aggressiveness, integrate into society and built their own knowledge⁹.

The act of playing is a creative human activity and the play is the highest way for children to learn, because it is through it that the development of interaction occurs, providing that the adult is an active participant in the play, who can act as an observer and organizer thus being an intermediary between the learning and the child¹⁰⁻¹⁴.

In the game, represented by ludic in education, there are two mainstreams that address antagonistically its use in the educational process. The first stream stands a playful function of the game in which it provides fun and has an essentially disinterested character. In this form of approaching the playful, the main feature is the provided pleasure; it should still be linked to the free adhesion of those who practice it, it is not allowed for the practitioner to seek any possibility of productivity¹¹.

Accordingly, there is the need to understand the issues involved in games and activities that can be applied. Psychomotor education is, in this way, a science that seeks to relate motor skills, mind and affection and with the help of playful, it facilitates comprehensive approach of children in the teaching-learning process.

Therefore, we see the need to build practices aimed at the playful and psychomotor aspects, so that there is a fuller training in child development, greater interaction and quality in the educational process¹².

A good structure of psychomotor education is the fundamental basis for the child's learning process. The development evolves gradually from the whole (classroom) to the specific (each child individually). Usually when children have difficulty in learning, it has as main reason disabilities in psychomotor development, which in this case is related directly to attention and concentration, which lead to difficulty in interpreting texts. Acquiring a good experience in this requisite can lead to

accomplishments that mark their emotional and intellectual life^{13,15}.

Attention allows the child to focus on a given stimulus (for example, what the teacher is talking) and simultaneously neutralize the other stimuli such as sounds outside the room or a conversation between friends. This feature of attention is called selectivity and without the knowledge construction it would be compromised as it would be impossible to select relevant information and maintain sustained attention for a period of time required for its processing¹⁴.

In mathematics, for example, attention deficiencies appear to hamper the use of ordered and hierarchical strategies involved in the use of a specific algorithm. Thus, children with attention deficit would present a tendency to develop disabilities related to arithmetic, because they cannot keep relevant information since they do not sustain attention focus while organizing the verbal information received. Thus this explains the main difficulty that children presented during the course of the activity involving numbers¹³.

Playful activities can be an important aspect to overcome anguish, anxiety, sadness, anger and violence since, through games and recreation the individual has the possibility to focus on the excitement and pleasure, and may transform these negative emotions in more positive emotions. Playing allow children to have fun while, at the same time, learn on a given subject. Often certain toys or plays help in the development of social life of the child, especially those used in ludic games⁸.

CONCLUSION

We conclude that the experiences made possible during the internship were crucial to confirm the importance of using play during occupational therapeutic intervention in different contexts and environments of children.

During interventions it was observed that children showed satisfactory responses to the actions performed, which generated a significant difference in teaching and learning

process in the discipline of Portuguese. Advances regarding the ability of students to hold activities involving attention, concentration, reasoning and problem solving during text interpretations, employed in the plays, were noticeable.

Other important benefits observed regarding the process was related to better socialization, teamwork and ability to respond and comply with the limits and rules used in the play. Therefore, the play becomes important in learning whether in the education sector or in social relations.

Through the internship and during the interventions performed in the school environment in partnership with the Portuguese teacher we realized that the activities developed by the Occupational Therapy internships were critical to the development of children, favoring the enhancement of their skills such as the resolution of problems, sequencing and execution of different actions, significant improvement in attention and concentration in the discipline of Portuguese, as well as the skills necessary for text interpretation.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Kátia Ariana Borges was responsible for the design and critical revision of the article. **Danielle Ferreira Mazetto** performed the design, analysis and interpretation of data and writing of the article. **Larissa Silva Alves, Mariana Fernanda Braga e Beatriz Lopes Pachelli** participated in the design, analysis and interpretation of data and writing of the article.